



COMMANDER'S CORNER



By **Maj. Gen. Edward C. Cardon**
Division Commander

BUILDING AND MAINTAINING TRUST

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Trust is an essential characteristic of the Army profession. For our Army to succeed, trust is like the air we breathe. Trust is the bedrock behind every decision we make at every level from general officer to sergeant. Trust, like other attributes such as integrity, honesty, character must never be impugned. It is to be guarded zealously, strengthened constantly and reinforced with every action we take.

Clearly, the Army is trusted by most of the American public and the international community. In May 2012, the results of the annual Harris Poll on the American public's confidence in leaders of major institutions were announced. "The military" again tops the list, as it has since 2008, with 55 percent of respondents saying they have a "great deal" of confidence in the military. While that is good news, the bad news is that this percentage has been slowly declining.

Professions have a number of characteristics that set them apart from other organizations, and foremost among them is earned trust. Ours is a sacred trust because we are trusted with human lives including each others, and as such, we are expected to live up to a higher standard. Our values and ethos are not empty words, but a code that we live by, both on and off duty. We are expected to do the right thing all the time, because that is what professional Soldiers do.

Everyone in our Army is a volunteer. Each of us signed up to serve, and in that service is tremendous power. The Army is not easy; it is not for everyone – it is demanding. Serving demands self discipline, character to do the right thing and values that make our Army respected around the world. Therefore, we must first trust ourselves. Trust is not something given freely, each of us has to earn it.

Soldiers trust Soldiers. We must trust those who stand to our left and right; trust that we know what to do; trust that we will do the right thing; trust that we will be there when it matters most.

The trust between leader and led is unique in our Army. We seek inspired leadership and followership that develops the trust seen in powerful teams that accomplish extraordinary things. This is done through discipline and training – done right, it builds trust. Leaders trust their Soldiers and Soldiers trust their leaders. With this harmony, we are a powerful team that will preserve and win in the most difficult circumstances.

Trust is also central to our great ROK-U.S. Alliance. The Alliance is not a piece of paper; it lives inside a relationship built on trust. Ours is a relationship based on



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shared goals – the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula. Our combined actions speak louder than words when it comes to building trust, and there is no better way to do that than developing relationships through combined training, through community partnerships and through Korean friendships.

We build trust with our alliance partners through combined training. That is why combined exercises such as Ulchi Freedom Guardian and our upcoming WARPATh exercises are so important.

We are now in the middle of the division's heaviest and most important training period. I call on each of you, Soldiers and leaders alike, to work to build that trust in yourselves, each other, and our ROK partners that will be essential to accomplishing our mission. It is our duty to be ready, and that readiness starts in the trust expected in our profession, the trust that lives in the heart, mind and soul of every Soldier and is based on what you do every day.

As the most trusted profession in America, it is our duty to maintain the trust of the American people. Importantly, as part of the great ROK-U.S. Alliance, we must earn and maintain the trust of the Korean people and their leaders as well.

To do that, our actions must speak louder than our words and we must prove we are trustworthy by maintaining our readiness and being good neighbors to those who put their trust in us.

Second to None!